Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Message Text

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PAGE 01 AMMAN 06730 101420Z

42
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 (ISO) W
---------- 058353
R 101340Z NOV 74
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2994
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 6730

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

GENEVA FOR MEPCDEL

LONDON FOR LAMBRAKIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, JO
SUBJ: JORDANIAN ROYAL DECREE SUMMONS PARLIAMENT TO
AMEND CONSTITUTION.

REF: AMMAN 6609

1. SUMMARY: JORDANIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY NOV 9 APPROVED
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS ALLOWING KING RIGHT TO DISSOLVE
UPPER HOUSE AND EXTENDING FROM FOUR MONTHS TO ONE YEAR THE
PERIOD KING CAN POSTPONE ELECTION AFTER DISSOLUTION OF
PARLIAMENT. RUBBER-STAMP APPROVAL IN LOWER HOUSE CONTRASTED
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PAGE 02 AMMAN 06730 101420Z

BY SPIRITED DEBATE IN SENATE, VOICING CONCERN BY PALESTINIANS

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

OVER POST-RABAT SITUATION. IN RARE SHOW OF OPPOSITION, ONE SENATOR VOTED AGAINST AMENDMENTS. END SUMMARY.

2. JORDANIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY NOV 9 APPROVED, WITH TWO HOUSES MEETING SEPARATELY, CONSTITUTIONAL EMENDMENTS CALLED FOR IN ROYAL DECREE ISSUED NOV 5 (REFTEL). AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 34 NOW ALLOWS KING TO DISSOLVE ROYALLY-APPOINTED UPPER HOUSE. IN ADDITION TO ALREADY-EXISTING RIGHT TO DISSOLVE POPULARLY-ELECTED LOWER HOUSE. AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 73 EXTENDS FROM FOUR MONTHS TO ONE YEAR THE PERIOD KING CAN POSTPONE ELECTION AFTER DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT. LOWER HOUSE (HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES) QUICKLY AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED AMENDMENTS WITH NO DEBATE.

3. SENATE SESSION, HOWEVER, PRODUCED ORATORY LAUDING UNITY OF TWO BANKS AND DEPLORING AS UNFORTUNATE NECESSITY THE OBLIGATION TO CONFORM TO RABAT RESOLUTIONS. SENATOR AHMAD KHALIL, ORIGINALLY FROM HAIFA (ALTHOUGH SENATORS DO NOT REPRESENT CONSTITUENCIES), PRAISED TREATMENT JORDANIANS HAD ACCORDED PALESTINIANS SINCE 1948, REAFFIRMED SACREDNESS OF UNITY, BUT SWORE TO SUPPORT KING'S RABAT DECISION "WITH TEARS IN MY EYES." PRESIDNT OF SENATE, SA'ID AL-MUFTI, NOTED THAT AT TIME OF DECLARING UNITY, HE WAS PM OF JORDAN; EXPRESSED SADNESS AT RECENT EVENTS. SEN WALID SALAH (NABLUS) CASE ONLY VOTE IN TWO HOUSES OPPOSING PASSAGE OF AMENDMENTS. IN EMOTIONAL PERORATION, HE DECLARED SUPPORT FOR KING BUT DEPLORED SUMMIT RESOLUTIONS. SINCE THESE AMENDMENTS ONLY ADVANCE EXECUTION OF RABAT RESOLUTIONS, HE SAID, HE COULD NOT VOTE FOR THEM. IN COMMENT UNREPORTED IN NEWSPAPERS, SALAH NOTED THAT SUMMIT WAS A DIVIDER OF JORDANIAN NATION, AND THAT KING SHOULD HAVE CONSULTED THE PEOPLE BEFORE MAKING SUCH A DECISION. SALAH ALSO COUNSELLED MODERATION AND PRUDENCE, NOTING THAT QUICK PASSAGE OF AMENDMENTS TOO RASH A STEP. FINAL VOTE IN SENATE 21-1, WITH ONE ABSTENTION AND SEVEN ABSENCES (MAINLY FROM WEST BANK).

4. COMMENT: RATHER FAST-MOVING PACE OF DOMESTIC EVENTS SINCE RABAT CONTINUES TO CREATE APPREHENSION IN RANKS OF PALESTINIANS. SOME SOURCES SAY THAT ALL CONSTRUCTION (PRIMARILY HOME IMPROVEMENTS) HAS HALTED IN AMMAN CITY CAMPS BECAUSE OF PRESENT UNCERTANTIES REGARDING PALESTINIANS' CITIZENSHIP STATUS. CONFIDENTIAL

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ROMORS ARE CIRCULATING WIDELY, AND EVENTS SUCH AS YESTERDAY'S PARLIAMENTARY CONVOCATION FAN THE FLAMES. WE ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT SECRET DOCUMENT IS CIRCULATING WHICH URGES PALESTINIANS TO CHOOSE PALESTINIAN RATHER THAN JORDANIAN CITIZENSHIP WHEN CITIZENSHIP ISSUE ARISES. SOME HARD-LINE EAST BANKERS, PROPOSING THAT ALL THOSE LIVING ON EAST BANK BE FORCED TO CHOOSE CITIZENSHIP "THIS MONTH". WHILE IT APPEARS THAT BOTH ENDS OF SPECTRUM (LOWER-INCOME PALESTINIANS AND HARD-LINE EAST BANKERS)

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

EXAGGERATE DANGERS, THERE IS SOME CONCERN AMONG
POPULATION OVER CURRENT SITUATION. WE EXPECT DISSOL-
UTION OF PARLIAMENT AND CABINET CHANGES SOON. AS YET NO TIMETABLE
ON QUESTION OF PALESTINIAN/JORDANIAN CITIZENSHIP ISSUE.
PICKERING

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